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Specialisation & division of labour – has strangled the voice of the writer. – Mr Baldwin – 'poetry is a harmless vocation'(!) This narrow view of artist's function is a modern one (put in mask to Fielding)

The revolutionary task of literature today is → to restore its great tradition, to break the bonds of subjectivism and narrow specialisation, to bring the creative writer face to face with his only important task, that winning the knowledge of truth of reality. On the forge of his own inner consciousness the writer takes the white-hot metal of reality and hammers it out, refashions it to his own purpose, beats it out madly by the violence of thought.

The whole procession of creation, the whole agony of the artist is in this violent conflict with reality in the effort to fashion a truthful picture of the world.

The really great writer, regardless of his own political views must always engaged in a terrible and revolutionary battle with reality, revolutionary because he must seek to change reality. For him his battle is always a battle of heaven and hell, a conflict of gods dethroned and gods ascendant, a fight for the soul of man.

"The aim of an ultimate art ... is an understanding which comprehends all forms and creeds" — but this does not mean accepting all or a selection of existing forms & creeds. ~~Clearly~~ certainly the artist must be concerned only with truth. Lenin: "Truth is formed out of the totality of all aspects of a phenomenon of reality, and their (mu

relationship" Again

"Knowledge is the eternal, infinite approach of thought to the object. The expression of nature in man's thought

must be understood not in a 'dead' abstract way, not <u>without movement</u>, not without contradictions and their solution. !!

From 'अनामी' Anami

Emerson: The poet writes from a real experience; the amateur feigns one. Talent amuses, but if your verse has not a necessary and autobiographical basis, though under whatever poetic veils, it shall not waste any time.

Tennyson: But who am I?
An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
With no language but a cry.

Russel:— In the spectacle of death, in the endurance of intolerable pain, and in the irrevocable of a vanished past, there is a sacredness, an overpowering awe, a feeling of the vastness, the depth, the inexhaustible mystery of existence, in which as by some strange marriage of pain, the sufferer is bound to the world by bonds of sorrow. In these moments of insight, we lose all eagerness of temporary desire, all struggling for petty ends, and all care for little ~~and~~ trivial things that, to a superficial view, make up the common life of day by day; we see ~~the~~, surrounding the narrow raft illumined by the flickering light of human comradeship the dark ocean on whose rolling waves we toss for a brief hour. From the great night without, a chill blast breaks in upon our refuge. All the loneliness of humanity amid hostile forces is concentrated upon the individual soul, which must struggle alone, with

that of courage it can command against the whole weight of a universe that cares nothing for its hopes and fears. Victory, in this struggle with the powers of darkness, is the true baptism into the glorious company of heroes, the true initiation into the overmastering beauty of human existence.

Russel [illegible] (unhindered) [illegible]

Walt Whitman

I was thinking of the day most splendid till
I saw what the not-day exhibited

I was thinking this globe enough, till
there sprang out so noiseless around
me myriads of globes

~~A~~ Aurobindo

Poetry can start from any plane of consciousness although like all art or one might say all creation — it must come through the vital if it is to be alive. And as there is always a joy in creation, that joy along with a certain enthousiasmos — not enthusiasm, if you please, but ενθουσιασμος must always be there whatever the source.

Dilip's letter : "... utter credulity which so often claims, passes for faith in our country — the faith of people who are too cowed by nature to question, who dare not enquire.

" Aurobindo:— Goethe goes much deeper than Shakespeare; he had an incomparably greater intellect than the English Poet and sounded problems of life and thought Shakespeare had no means of approaching even. But he was certainly not a greater poet; I cannot either admit that he was an equal. He wrote out of his intelligence and his style and movement nowhere came near the poetic power, the magic, the sovereign expression and profound or subtle rhythms of Shakespeare. Shakespeare was a supreme poet and one might almost say, nothing else; Goethe was by far the greater man and the greater brain, but he was a poet by choice rather than by the very necessity of his being. He wrote his poetry as he did everything else with a great skill and effective genius, but it was only part of his genius and not the whole. And there is a touch of wanting — the touch of an absolute poetic inevitability; this lack leaves his poetry on a lower level than of the few quite supreme poets.

I do not think Harris's attack on Shaw's
taken very seriously any more than can Wells' jest about his pronunciation and
English being the sole astonishing thing about him . . . You cannot take

~~[illegible]~~ **Aurobindo on Shaw.**

their humorous sparrings as considered apprecia[tions]; if you do, you turn exquisite jests into solemn ma[tter]

. . . For this kind of humour, light as air and sharp as a razor-blade, epigrammatic, paradoxical, often flavoured with burlesque seriousness and urbane hyperbole, good-humoured and cutting at once, is not English in origin. It was brought in by two Irishmen, Shaw and Wilde. Harris's stroke about the Rodin bust and Wells's sally are entirely in the Shavian turn and the manner. They are showing their cleverness by striking their guru in swordsmanship with his own rapier. Harris's attack on Shaw's literary reputation may have been serious; there was a sombre and violent brutality about him which made it possible; but his main motive was to prolong his own notoriety by a clever and vigorous assault on the mammoth of the hour. Shaw himself supplied material for his critic, knowing what he would write, and edited this damaging assault on his own fame, a typical Irish act at once of chivalry and whimsical humour. I don't think Harris had much understanding of Shaw the man as apart from the writer; the Anglo-saxon is not capable of understanding either Irish character or Irish humour, it is so different from his own. And Shaw is Irish through and through; there is nothing English about him except the language he writes and even that he has changed into the Irish ease, flow and edge and clarity — though not bringing into it, as Wilde did, Irish poetry and colour.

— Shaw's seriousness and humour, real seriousness and mock seriousness run into each other in a baffling inextricable mélange, thoroughly Irish in character — for it is the native Irish turn to speak lightly when in deadly earnest and to utter the most extravagant jests with a profound air of seriousness, — and it so puzzled the British public that they could not for a long time make up their mind as to how to take him. At first they took him for a jester dancing with cap and bells, then for a new kind

(Contd. on page . . .

Basis of Morality   Anil Baran Roy

So long morality associated with religion — modern thought striking at the root of orthodox religion — what is the way out? 1) this a prelude of higher and nobler life — or 2) bring & reestablish the old order — should the teaching of religion be intensified? —

Religion asks us to believe things having no rational proof or scientific evidence — any act of tyranny and injustice can be justified on grounds of religion — i.e. Sati and burning the heretics. So credal religion to be taught — then? Voltaire "Even if God did not exist it would be necessary to invent him." A radical change in human nature needed.

Marx & Freud — tended to undermine people's faith in organized religion;

Marx holds that history is shaped by economic forces, while Freud holds that the life of man is determined by the hidden forces that work in his subconscious ~~state~~ nature.

Economic conditions no doubt have great influence, but they are secondary; primary determinants are psychological factors. If Communism ~~[illegible]~~ succeeds in giving all people a decent economic life, that would not cure ~~[illegible]~~ men of their sadistic and masochistic impulses which are the root cause of all tyranny & oppression in the world.; rather goaded by the monotony of a peaceful & prosperous life, men may invent new means and methods of torturing themselves and others.

Some method necessary to completely eradicate the roots of evil in human nature.

If this is impossible — no hope for humanity & to accept ~~what~~ what Huxley once said :- "Do what you will!"

Psycho analysts say! "there is a limit to human civilisation beyond which it cannot rise."

But a deeper view of human nature and human possibilities does not give countenance to such pessimism & despair.

of mocking Hebrew prophet or Puritan reformer! Needless to say both judgements were entirely out of focus. The Irishman is on one side of him, the vital side, a 'passione' imaginative and romantic, intensely emotional, violently impulsive, easily inspired to poetry or rhetoric, moved by indignation and suffering to a mixture of aggressive militancy, wistful dreaming and sardonic extravagant humour; on the other ~~hand~~ side, he is keen in intellect, positive, downright hating all loose foggy sentimentalism and solemn pretence and prose, in order to avoid the appearance of them in himself, to cover himself with a jest at every step; it is at once his mask and his defence. At bottom he has the possibility in him of a modern Curtius leaping into the yawning pit for a cause, an Utopist or a Don Quixote, — according to occasions a fighter for dreams, an idealistic pugilist, a rebel or a reckless but often shrewd and successful adventurer. Shaw has all that in him, but with a cool intellectual clearness, also Irish, but not often put to such use, which dominates it all and tones it down, subdues it into measure and balance, gives an even harmonising colour. There is as a result a brilliant tempered edge of flame, lambent, lighting up what it attacks and destroys, and destroying it by the light it throws upon it, not fiercely but trenchantly — though with a trenchant playfulness — aggressive and corrosive. An ostentation of humour and parade covers up the attack and puts the opponent off his defence. That is why the English mind never understood Shaw and yet allowed itself to be captured

by him and its old established ideas, "moral" positions, impenetrable armour of commercialised puritanism and self-righteous Victorian assurance to be ravaged and burned out of existence by Shaw and his allies. Anyone who knows ~~Englan~~ Victorian England and sees the difference now cannot but be struck by it and Shaw's part in it, at least ~~the~~ in preparing ~~the~~ and making it possible, is undeniable. That is why I call him devastating, not in any ostentatiously catastrophic sense, for there is a quietly trenchant type of devastatingness, because he has helped to lay ~~down~~ low all these things with his scythe of sarcastic ~~humour~~ mockery and lightly, humorously penetrating seriousness — effective, as you call it, but too deadly in its effects to be called merely effective.

That is Shaw as I have seen him and I do not believe there is anything seriously wrong in my ~~view~~ estimate. I don't think we can complain of his seriousness about pacifism, socialism and the rest of it, — it was simply the form in which he put his dream, the dream he needed to fight for, needed by his Irish nature. Shaw's bugbear was unreason and disorder, his

dream was a humanity delivered from vital illusions and deceptions, organising the life-force in obedience to reason; casting out waste and folly as much as possible. It is not likely to happen in the way he hoped; reason has its own illusions, and, though he strove against imprisonment in his own rationalistic ideals, trying to escape from them by the issue of his mocking critical humour, he could not help being their prisoner. As for his pose of self-praise, no doubt he valued himself, — the public fighter like the man of action needs to do so in order to act or to fight. Most, though not all, try to veil it, render an affectation of modesty; Shaw, on the contrary, took the course of raising it to a humorous pitch of burlesque and extravagance. It was at once part of his strategy in commanding attention and a means of mocking at himself — I was not speaking of analytical self-mockery, but of the whimsical Irish kind — so as to keep himself straight and at the same time mocking his audience. It's a peculiarly Irish kind of humour to say extravagant things with a calm convinced tone as if announcing a perfectly serious proposition — the Irish exaggeration of the humour called by the French *pince-sans-rire*. His hyperboles of self-praise actually rank with this humorous genre of extravagant comparison

of himself, were Shakespeare to be taken in dull earnest with no smile at it, he would be either a witless ass or a giant of humourless arrogance, — and Bernard Shaw could be neither.

As to his position in literature, I have given my opinion; but more precisely, I imagine he will take some place but not a very large place, once the drums have ceased beating and the fighting is over. He has given too much to the battles of the hour perhaps to claim a large share of the future. I suppose some of his plays will survive for their wit and humour and cleverness more than for any higher dramatic quality, like those of those other Irishmen Goldsmith, Sheridan and Wilde. His prefaces may be saved their style and force, but it is not sure. At any rate, as a personality he is not likely to be forgotten, even if his writings fade. To compare him with France is futile — they were minds too different and moving in too different domains for comparison to be possible.

